LOCAL CHAMPIONS

IMPACT REPORT

2022-2024



Contents

IMPACT REPORT

Two years of Local Champions CIC



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As a leadership and race equality consultant and trainer I feel really privileged to be contributing in a really small way to the work of the Local Champions that has no limits. The work of dismantling inequalities is tiresome, challenging and at times demoralising; but when you see a space where there is genuine commitment, having impact and creating legacy you want to stay a while and learn.

Local Champions have a strong focus on empowering people that experience the most marginalisation in ways that have long term impact and create change in local communities and beyond. Understanding the challenges of creating change in London is really important.

Whilst some funders and charities have shifted their focus from London, there are still communities in London that do not have access to opportunities, networks and learning and who experience a range of interconnecting challenges. Therefore the importance of Local Champions' work cannot be overestimated.



It is widely understood that one of the most important factors for social mobility is having a network that can provide the introductions, signposting and support to ensure success. This is traditionally inaccessible for those who have multiple, compounding intersectionalities and face increased systemic barriers. Local Champions share 10 stories of the impact of empowering young people, women and those from marginalised groups and they are inspiring. Meeting and engaging with those stories helps to articulate why Local Champions do what they say- they are catalysts of change.

I would urge you to spend the time reading and immersing yourself in the 10 stories, understanding the data and seeing their outcomes and engaging with their 10 flagship initiatives. Their mission is not small. It is not one area. They are not seeking to be classified and labelled as one thing. They are seeking to change lives. Understanding their ecosystem allows us to understand that Local Champions are not wasting time trying to be an 'ally'. They are 'being the change'

I am excited to see the world they are creating. They are limitless.

Foreword by:
Orlene Badu
Author and Education Consultant
Mentor @ Local Champions











About Us

We are catalysts of change. A team of creatives, coaches and consultants who understand that the best way to build a better world, is to ignite the power of what's possible in the hearts and the hands of local people, globally.

WHAT WE DO

We are in the business of deep impact. Our key focus areas are building soft infrastructure which tackle UN SDGs including no poverty, good health and wellbeing, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities and sustainable cities and communities. Our initiatives improve social cohesion, community health and wellbeing, youth employ meant and career agency and gender equality.

Supported by and Partnered with:









Because we believe in the power of potential and our communities.

THE TEAM



Nikita Gicanda Vervelde,
Founder & CEO



Jessica Okwuonu,
Co-Director
from 2022-2024



Mafalda Silva,
Co- Director



Mikhi Fearon,
Youth Facilitator



Ruth Haley,
Product Owner



Ahmed Mire,
Developer



Varsha Alexandra,
Head Coach



Trine Garrett,
Action learning Facilitator



Sarah Agyeman,
Digital Marketer



Toyin Martins,
Designer

OUR ADVISORS



Nana Badu
CEO, Badu Sports



Kat Craig,
Human Rights Lawyer and
Founder, Athlead



Abigail Ingram
Club Manager, Girls United



Rebecca Trevalyan,
Founder, Library of Things
and Platform Places



Louis Howell,
Founder 7PK and
Revolution Hive



Anthony Leonard,
Founder That Green Life



Ali Kakande,
Founder Carib Eats



Nabeelah Asgher
Youth Advisor



Pheonix Debola
Accountant and Tax
Specialist

TWO YEARS OF MAKING LOCAL CHAMPIONS

"Two years ago I had this idea that we could transform voluntary led grassroots organisations into wage paying social enterprises. The mission was to help our peers make a living while doing the things that they love, flexibly and which we think society needs more of.

We wanted to redesign the economy for more equitable opportunity / participation. We wanted to develop innovative solutions. We wanted to disperse and forward grants and host pitch events. We wanted to incubate neighbourhood led social innovation. We wanted to enjoy equitable access to soft infrastructure; to support the build of a more inclusive ecosystem .

Today Local Champions works across East, South and North London, has a PAYE set up, and we're actively working on initiatives redesigning access, diversity, equality, support and inclusivity across 6 key sectors: education, democracy, the voluntary youth sector, private industry, sport, and the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Specifically supporting marginalised communities whilst re designing the systems that currently impose barriers upon us all"

- Nikita Gicanda Vervelde,
Founder & CEO





We could have filled an entire report with stories from each initiative alone. However, we want to share 10 stories from people who have been part of our journey and represent the impact we look to create..



Local Champion, Ali Kakande
Founder, Carib Eats

Over the past two transformative years, my journey with Carib Eats has been significantly enriched through the unwavering support of Local Champions.

What distinguishes Local Champions is not just the support they offer but the flexibility embedded in their approach, accommodating various modes of communication such as WhatsApp and personalised meetings.

Local Champions opened the door to numerous opportunities, starting with my participation in a food incubator and accelerator, Secret Sauce, in 2022. I then went on to participate in a panel discussion titled 'A Day in the Life of a Social Entrepreneur in 2023.' This platform not only allowed me to share my experiences but also led to an invitation to join the Local Champions Advisory Board.

Being a part of this board is not just an honour; it's a chance to contribute, share insights, and learn from a diverse group of visionaries. **One of the most impactful collaborations facilitated by Local Champions was my involvement in the Democracy Fund**.

With their support, I successfully applied for a project focused on enhancing voter participation within the older Caribbean community. This initiative aligns with Carib Eats' commitment to making a meaningful impact beyond culinary experiences.
Local Champions has been instrumental in propelling my leadership journey. I now hold positions on various influential boards, including the Advisory Board of Do It Now Now, the VCS Leadership Board in Hackney, and the Dementia Alliance Board—an area close to my heart.

Participating in pitching competitions, such as Black Rock & Hatch, where Carib Eats secured first place, and reaching the finals of the Black Funding Network, were pivotal moments for me. These accomplishments not only raised funds but also amplified the visibility of Carib Eats. I've also had the privilege of sharing my insights on numerous panels and conducting pitching clinics.

Recently, Carib Eats received a Lottery grant, a significant milestone that marks the growth and impact we aspire to achieve.

The journey with Local Champions has been more than professional development; it's a personal connection where I can be authentic and feel meaningfully supported.

In essence, Local Champions has played a crucial role in shaping my trajectory, making every success and milestone a shared achievement. I am immensely grateful for their unwavering support and look forward to continued collaboration, growth, and positive impact.

My name is James Kaguima, the multi award-winning founder of Skate Cabal, and I'm thrilled to share the incredible journey that Local Champions, through the Young Entrepreneurs Alliance (YEA) programme, has played a pivotal role in shaping.



Local Champion,
James Kaguima
Founder, Skate Cabal
Chair at Elevate Board, LLDC

The YEA Programme Spark:

Two years ago, I embarked on the YEA programme, a collaboration led by Local Champions CIC and Echo, supported by Lendlease, London Legacy Development Corporation, IQL, New Ground Creations and Newham Council. Little did I know that this experience would be the catalyst for a transformative entrepreneurial journey.

Skate Cabal's Evolution:

Post-YEA, armed with newfound knowledge and confidence, I successfully secured match funding from various funders, laying the foundation for Skate Cabal. What began as a local roller-skating project quickly evolved into a force for broader societal impact.

Beyond Roller Skating:

Skate Cabal has earned accolades such as the East London Young Community Hero from Rotary Club and special recognition from the High Sheriff of Greater London, won YIC Excellence Award from Newham Council and has been nominated for Rising Star Changemaker awards from Foundervine and Lloyds Bank, to name a few. These achievements showcase the reach and influence our initiatives have attained.

Skating Towards Societal Change:

Recently, with Local Champions' continued support, I secured funding from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Democracy Fund UK. This has empowered us to use roller skating as a tool for societal change, particularly in empowering the Black community to actively engage in the democratic process.

Beyond Entrepreneurship:

In addition to my role as the founder of Skate Cabal, I'm excited to share that I've been elected as the Chair of Elevate, a youth-inclusive leadership collective shaping and co-designing programmes and projects at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and East London.

Working alongside local government, planning authorities, and various corporations, Elevate ensures that community interests are at the heart of key decisions. This is yet another chapter in my journey of making a positive impact in our community.

Elevate has been awarded funding from Spirit of 2012. We are set to develop and deliver a grant programme aimed at providing financial support to young people and funding community/youth-led projects—a full circle moment in our commitment to fostering positive change and opportunities for the next generation.



Local Champion,
Nabeelah Asgher
Project 'Wisdom Woman'

Local Champions mentorship has been invaluable, especially in the creation of my project called "Wisdom Woman," which seeks to inspire young BAME girls to pursue STEM subjects.

Under their guidance, **I've learned the power of empowerment,** not only to write effective emails and master the art of networking but also to challenge myself in extraordinary ways. For example we went to fly a plane, a thrilling experience that significantly boosted my confidence and communication skills, pushing me beyond my comfort zone.

This journey has not only enhanced my health and wellbeing but also strengthened my relationships and engagement in the community.

Nikita's unwavering support has allowed me to become more confident and improve my public speaking skills through the countless presentations she has made me perform which has a positive impact on my journey on becoming a more confident entrepreneur.



Local Champion, Kesi Steven
Founder, Bakes & Tings

I am Kesi Steven, founder of a Caribbean fusion food business called 'Bakes N Tings'.
I was accepted onto the YEA programme in 2023 with just a business name, a logo, and a very brief idea of what I wanted my food business to be and how to bring it into fruition.

The YEA programme as a whole was a transformative experience; the sessions led by Local Champions focused on both business and personal development.

I was able to learn the ins and outs of building a business such as developing the brand, marketing, business roadmapping, finance, product pricing, target markets, and more. As well as working on myself as an entrepreneur and the key personal skills required to be successful and run a business.

We also had check-ins and mindfulness activities throughout each session which allowed us to connect as a cohort and be honest about how we are feeling on our respective journeys.

Having a safe space to talk really helped me and I believed it helped others on the cohort release any stress, talk about our day to day, identify what we need to work on internally, and how to create a work life balance in general.

The added bonus to this programme was being paired with a business mentor, Frederick was my first choice, and he was the right choice. The support was and still is very helpful, and he is a key reason to my success so far. As I stated before- all I had was a logo, name, and an idea. He asked me if I could cook, to which I said 'yes' (even though I wasn't a confident cook and only wanted to be the founder of the business and not be in the kitchen). He told me to get in the kitchen and start cooking, make content, and build my business from there. There were many doubts in my head but I pushed them to the side and did exactly what he said.

Since that first conversation over the past year I have created my Instagram and Tiktok pages, started cooking and creating content, I have new people following my pages every week, I have perfected the recipes that I want on my menu, I have had people taste my food and received some great feedback.

Now I plan to register my business in a few weeks, and then plan a launch event in May 2024.
Programmes like YEA are extremely important for people like me; I come from a family of workers, my mum always told me to just get a job, make money and survive. But I have always had an entrepreneurial mindset, I have always wanted to run my own businesses, but lacked the knowledge, the support and mentorship needed to be successful.

Now because of YEA I possess all that I need to launch my business 'Bakes n Tings', a Caribbean fusion food takeaway that is registered as a limited company but operates like a social enterprise. Bakes N Tings will be the first Caribbean owned food business in Hammersmith, West London and will provide a safe space for my local community to eat, connect, learn, and have a good time! There are many aspiring entrepreneurs out there of all ages needing support/guidance, and I hope in time they find the right programme or people to help them achieve their goals.







Local Champion, Ema Tiller Corey
Mom to Lenny and Makeup Artist
& Hair Stylist

There's no shortage of challenges when you're a single parent, and finding time away from my child or motivation to move my body has felt impossible over the years; when I heard about local champions through my old football team **I was so excited that someone had considered all these needs and found a way to solve them.**

The coaching is incredible! With such high level coaches, not only does it get my football skills and fitness up, it's also really fulfilling to have someone with that level of expertise spend time on you.

When you're a full time caregiver, you give all of yourself to your child(ren), constantly monitoring/praising/teaching them, so to have someone doing all of those things for you, cheering you on, correcting your form, teaching you new things, it honestly feels so enriching.The supportive culture created at these sessions make it a space to connect with other women in similar circumstances, **it's not just reassuring and crucial for my mental health, it's also really fun!** I would not be able to attend these sessions without the offer of childcare attached, it's an absolute game changer for me.

We can wake up on a Saturday, equally excited about our mornings; my son loves hanging out at the childminders, and is proud to tell all his friends that I'm playing football. **It's as important for him to see me do something uplifting for myself, as it is for me to do it!**



Local Champion, Ruth Haley
Director, LIS
Product Manager

Discovering Local Champions through my participation in the Young Entrepreneurs Alliance in 2022 was a game-changer for my entrepreneurial journey.

This transformative program, co-led by Local Champions and Echo, provided me with invaluable insights and fostered my **personal and professional growth**. From the outset, Local Champions empowered me to delve deeper into my entrepreneurial spirit, guiding me towards a greater understanding of my passions, strengths and areas for improvement.

What truly sets Local Champions apart is the ongoing support and mentorship that follows.

The **sense of belonging and confidence** I've gained through their continuous guidance has been instrumental in shaping my entrepreneurial network, refining my skills, and expanding my portfolio. The authenticity and forward-thinking mentality instilled by Local Champions serve as an unwavering source of inspiration, driving me to excel every day.

My collaboration with Nikita and Local Champions since my YEA experience has been **transformative**. Working closely on the Freelance Exchange, Local Champions' pioneering digital product, has allowed me to take on a pivotal role in shaping the direction of my career. As the Product Manager for this Local Champions initiative, I have: driven the process, from ideation to product deployment, including orchestrating a two-day Design Hack that engaged a diverse set of stakeholders. Subsequently, I collaborated with an agile development team, contributing not only to the success of the product but also significantly enhancing my Product Portfolio.

Local Champions is a catalyst for personal and professional evolution. The unwavering support, innovative thinking, and authentic mentorship provided by Local Champions have been the driving force behind my entrepreneurial success.

If you're serious about making meaningful strides in your entrepreneurial journey, aligning yourself with Local Champions is a decision you won't regret.

What does Local Champions mean to me? To be honest up until a year ago I didn't know much about Local Champions, yes, I did hear about it but I never knew exactly what they did. It wasn't until I got to work closely with them that **they have completely open my eyes and horizons.** Local Champions is a non-profit organisation that has helped me and my community in so many ways and if I wasn't part of it, I would find it very hard to believe that such organisations even exist.

Being part of LCCIC has been a life saver and allowed me to keep my dreams alive. If it wasn't for their dedication and constant support in supporting my project for my community, lots of people today may not even be with us. In partnership with Local Champions, I provide mentorship program for u25 in my football club but also to people that are over 25 because. You don't stop being a mentor after a certain age, but you continue this journey as it involves everyone around you. Having local champion behind us helps us strive and continue to believe in the project we started 2 years ago to provide a safe and inclusive environment to everyone within the football business.



We are talking about U25, over 25, people with disabilities, people from different backgrounds, people that come from domestic abuse or that suffer from mental health. All these people had nowhere to go or didn't think they had a place where they belonged. With the constant support of Local Champions, we have managed to secure these people **a safe environment to express themselves without any judgement.**

The constant training and courses they provide also help me to expand my knowledge to then bring it back to my environment where I can better things.
Being part of Local Champions and them existing is an opportunity to meet new people who share the same interests as me or a similar vision. **When you choose to be part of such an organisation that hold such great values but that also implement them, and you see the results, it makes you believe that chances can be made - you just need to be around the right people.** With Local Champions you gain access to people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences who all share a common goal.

Local Champion, Varsha Alexandra, Founder of Olympias FC

Local champion strengthens existing relationships by providing a common activity for you and your project and finding a way to keep striving forward for a better community for all of us.

Being part of it can make you feel more connected to the people around you. Having a sense of your effect on the lives of others may inspire you to engage with other aspects of your community, like local politics or community programmes. By improving your community, you can also add value to your own experience within it.

This is what local champions does to you and their importance is vital as making people feel better and improving the community, we live in is not for everyone but Local champions has a commitment and so far has never let me or my community down and for this I can only be eternally grateful.



Local Champion, Toyin Nadine Martins, UX Designer

I was lucky enough to come across the opportunity to join the design sprint as a UX designer for Good Growth Hub and Local Champions, through a group for Women of Colour who skate in the local area! I had just finished my master's degree and **was exploring my options for work,** with a few of my friends suggesting that I should freelance. When I found the opportunity, I was so grateful to be asked to join the team and work on the Intro to Freelance Questionnaire plugin.

I enjoyed meeting people who had similar interests to me: getting young freelancers to optimise their ability to find and keep work. It was important to me to showcase my skills in an environment where being myself was encouraged. The work that is being done at Local Champions is important for **helping people like me to maximise their potential,** by providing young people in the local area with the ability to collaborate with others and demonstrate the skills we have. Encouraging people like me to pursue their passions; through opportunities that support local people and local talent.







Local Champion, Althea Marshall Community Lead, The Badu Way

I met Nikita some time ago, through working at Badu sports. She was always doing something positive and encouraging for the local community and we talked about project we could collaborate on with Local Champions.

Last July (2023), she came into the Badu Cafe looking for a volunteer to take part in her next venture of intergenerational skydiving. At first It was a definite no, then as the conversation continued and the reasoning behind the jump became more apparent I decided it had to be a yes!

A yes because, it was more about conquering fears, beating anxieties, moving out of your comfort zone and taking a challenge.

The day came, we drove, encouraging each other all the way. **Now we were a team** of support to each other. That's what makes the difference: having support, being encouraged, walking the journey together, holding hands, feeling positive..

Overcoming. Conquerors of the mind set. These goals and more were achieved that day during and after the sky dive. **It changed the way I approach situations. It changed my mindset of fear & anxiety.**

It gave me hope in everything and to get through anything. I have learned how to stay focused on the job at hand and not to cloud my thoughts with too much emotion. I am now a better version of me because of this challenge & because of Local Champions.

I hope others will be given the opportunity to engage in life changing experiences with the Local Champions.

Thank you Nikita x



Local Champion,
Brenda Pereira Gavino,
Occupational Therapist, Disability Analyst and Co-founder

Local Champions, as a non-profit organisation, plays **a crucial role in fostering community support and empowerment through its mentorship program.** As a second-generation immigrant, I understand the challenges individuals face in navigating a new country's processes, even with supportive parents. Joining this mentoring initiative allows me to leverage my experiences in health and sports, bridging the gap for others who, like me, may have had to navigate these intricacies independently. The program is instrumental in breaking down barriers and providing guidance to mentees, ensuring they have the support needed to achieve their goals.

Beyond my role as a mentor, I've gained valuable insights into various specialties, programs, and opportunities, highlighting the program's dual impact of knowledge sharing and continuous learning. Local Champions serves as a vital platform for building connections, sharing experiences, and ultimately empowering individuals on their journeys.

To mark our 2 year anniversary, we assessed the economic and social contribution local champions has had on London and the UK social ecosystem more widely.

QUANTIFYING OUR IMPACT

Social Outcomes

- Sense of belonging
- Networks
- Connection to local community
- collaborations
- Brand trust
- Confidence and self believe

Economic outcomes

- New skills
- Finance secured
- Jobs created
- Career agency

Health and wellbeing outcomes

- Increase in mental health
- Wellbeing ..
- Loneliness
- Digital skills / access

Engagement outcomes

- Retention (on multiple programmes or pathways with us)
- Overall satisfaction on content and facilitation
- Mindset changes?
- Feeling of empowerment etc
- More aware of local opportunities

We are catalysts of change





Indirectly supported over **17,000 local residents** across 10 boroughs of London.



Delivered **+350 hours** of expert-led training and masterclasses



Directly supported **608** entrepreneurs & young people

86% being people of the global majority or non-white	**76%** identified as women or non-binary.	**32%** of participants under the age of 30.
£500,000+ in grant and bid funding towards community-led organisations was secured with our support	**58%** Felt more connected to their community	**88%** of participants improved their confidence
93% of participants improved knowledge and know how	**85%** of participants gained new tools and skills	**178+ hours** of 1-2-1 support
over **45** 'good work' jobs were created as a result of our initiatives	**92%** Satisfaction rate	**76%** Increase in skills and knowledge

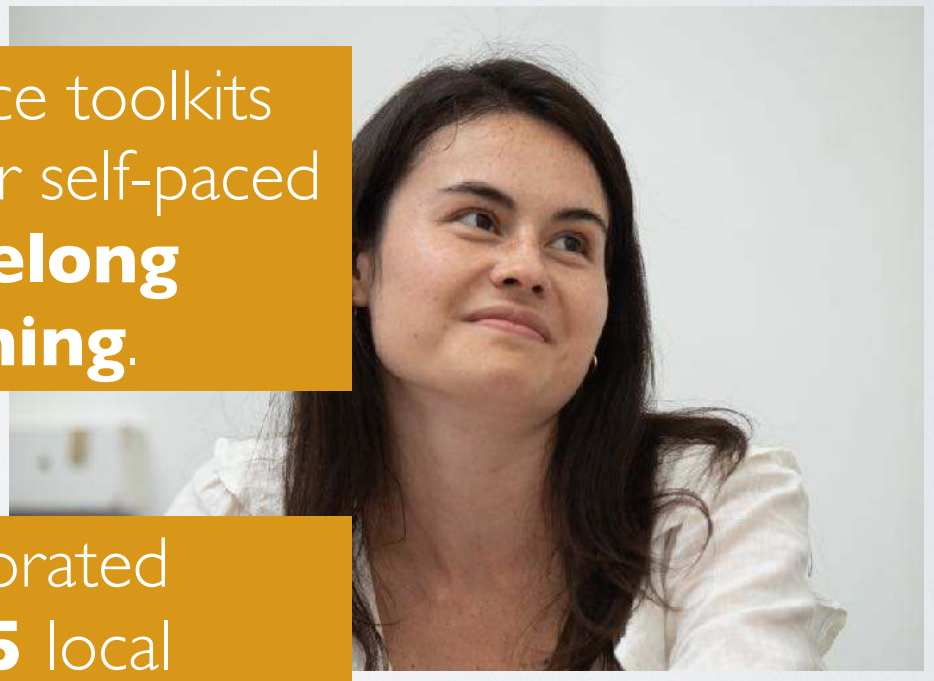
We make local champions.



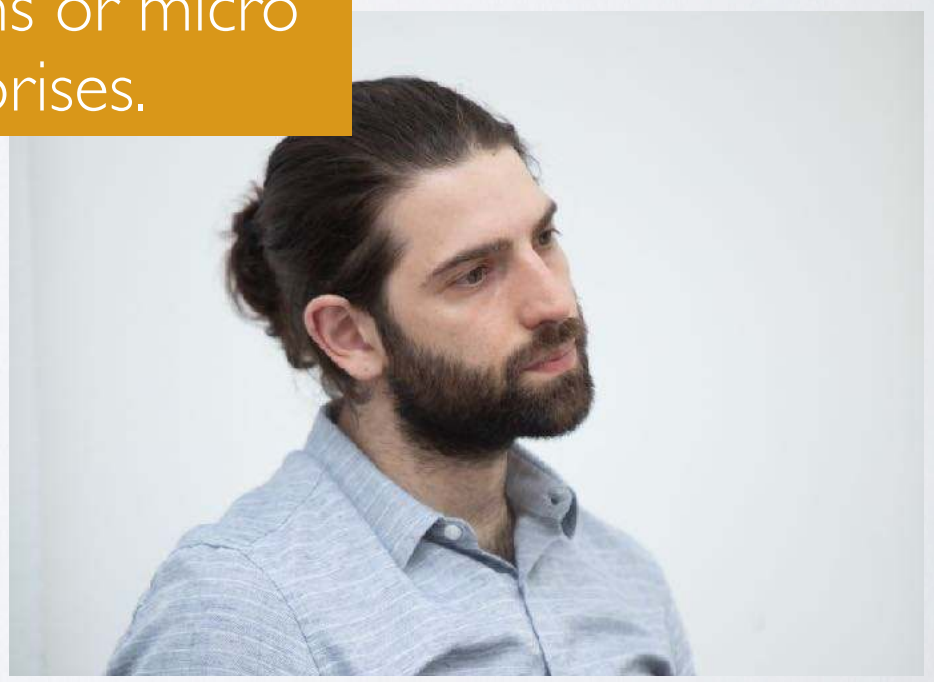
Produced **8 events** including networking, panel discussions and pitch events.



15 resource toolkits produced for self-paced and **lifelong learning**.



Collaborated with **35** local organisations or micro enterprises.



OUR 12 FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

We empower people & places to reach their potential.

Setting in motion a cycle of prosperity, that starts at the grassroots, and build the foundations of a two-way street where organisations support the talent on their doorstep and benefit in return.

By path finding, problem solving and perception shifting until they can believe in what's possible. We make local champions. Empowering people and place makers to bring about the change they want for themselves and their communities.



The Young Entrepreneurs Alliance (YEA) Extended
The Olympic Park Cohort 1

20 young entrepreneurs under 30 received:
14 weeks of support and masterclasses
1-2-1 Coaching and Mentorship
1 Pitch Event
Over 100 hours of training and expert advice

Designed by Local Champions, delivered in partnership with Economy of Hours and New Ground Creations. Funded by LendLease.

£40,000







Young Entrepreneurs Alliance (reduced)

The Lambeth Cohort

YEA Lambeth took 10 young entrepreneurs on a 12 week journey from idea to pitch event.

12 masterclasses
12 get it done sessions (active implementation time)
Peer learning and networks
121 mentorship

£25,000



YEA!
Young Entrepreneurs Alliance











Bid & Grant Writing Masterclasses

70 organisations attended our 2 masterclass cohorts across Haringey for social entrepreneurs. We deliver fundraising support

We demystified the fundraising arena and introduced tools, systems and approaches to fundraise.

Over 50% managed to secure funding.
5 people were invited to their first panelist role.
6 masterclasses
3 networking events
50 hours of follow on 121 and group support

£13,500









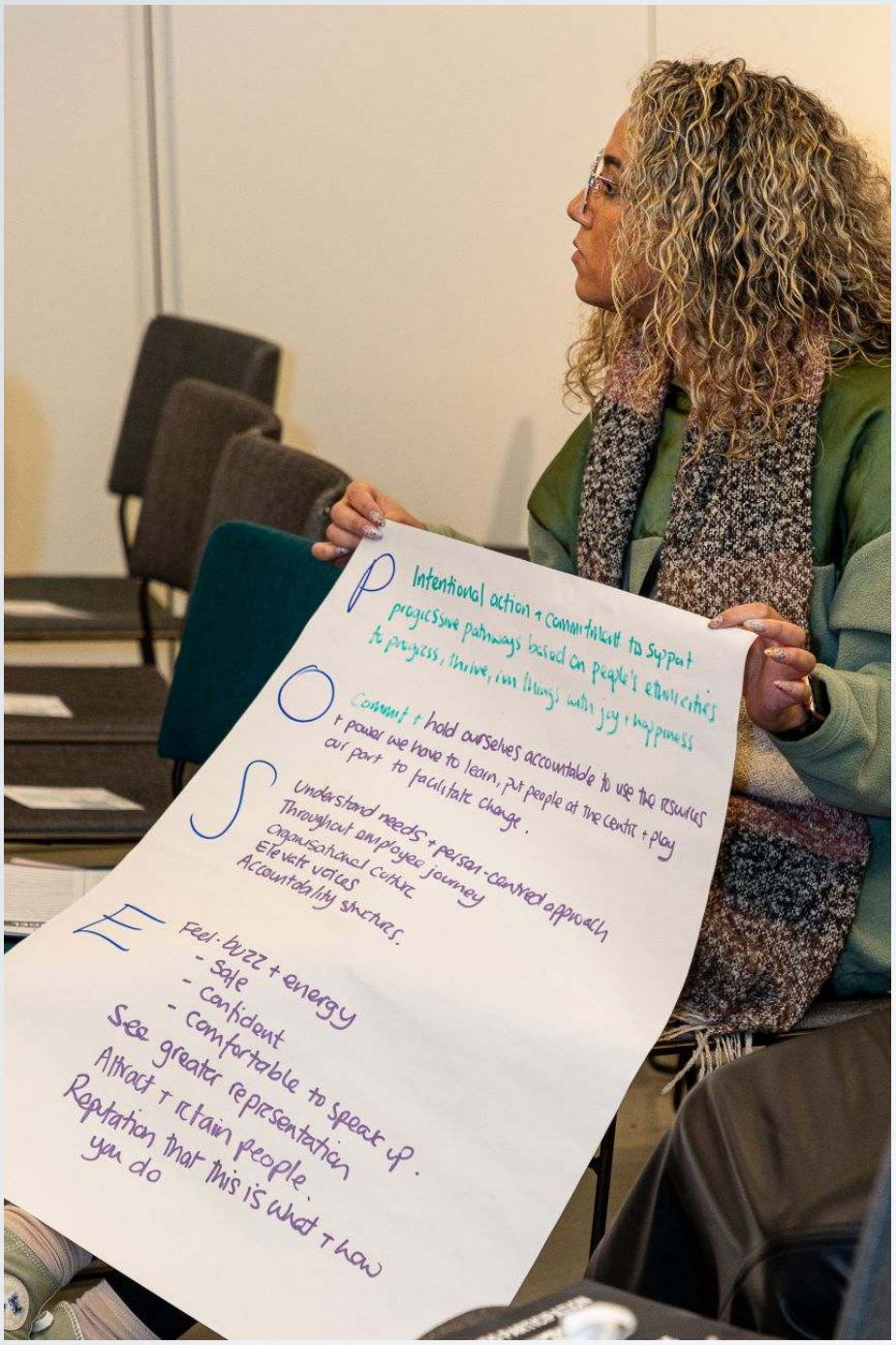
Propel (Girl Hood Active) Mentoring

We mentor young people

Delivering 100 hours of mentoring to young people under 30 across Hackney, Waltham Forest, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Brixton, Camden, Lewisham, and more.

Covering young people's interest in science, engineering, technology, maths, photography, arts, business, and more. + Offering work placements. Supporting x young people and focusing on empowerment.

£18,000









TRIUMPH
wearetriumph.org

An independent Action Group of organisations and colleagues in the Voluntary Youth Sector that, since July 2020 have reviewed, surveyed and had much needed dialogue about the systemic inequities that still exist in our beloved sector – with a core focus on racial inequality.

£50,000 Minimum Ticket









Secret Sauce Accelerator

We incubate food businesses and accelerate food businesses, supporting 60 entrepreneurs and delivering over 100 hours of training, 121 support and 20 weeks of supper clubs and peer action learning.

£40,000









Secret Sauce Incubator

We incubate food businesses and accelerate food businesses, supporting 60 entrepreneurs and delivering over 100 hours of training, 121 support and 20 weeks of supper clubs and peer action learning.

£25,000

Mother and care programme
£15.000

Our co created community initiative providing free weekly football sessions with childcare and therapeutic coaches to mothers and careers in east london.



Olympias FC
£10,000

A football club for those with trauma, mental health, LGBTQI+





HWFC
£12000

A LGBTQ+ semi profesional inclusive football



Sport for Development Suite
£25,000





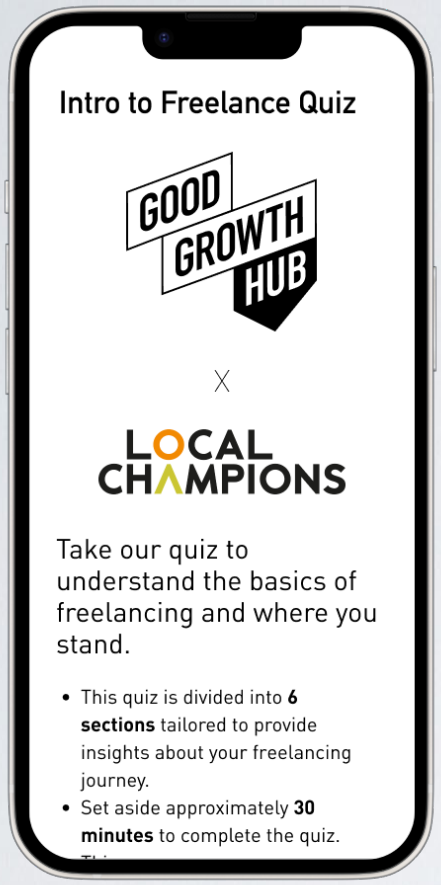


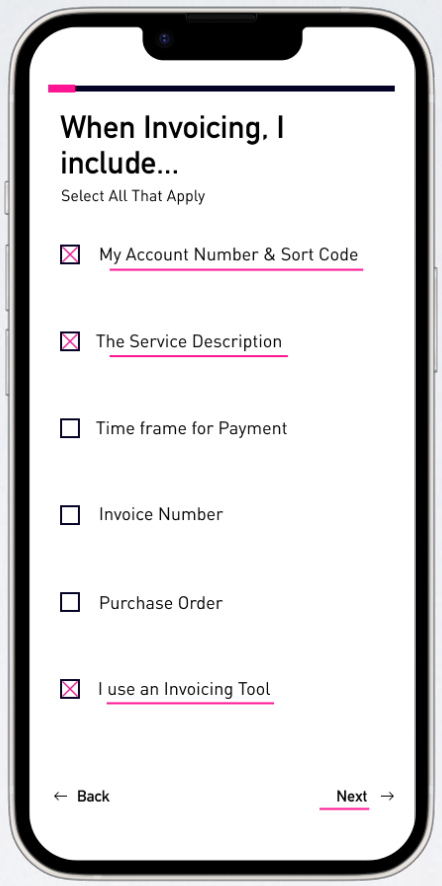


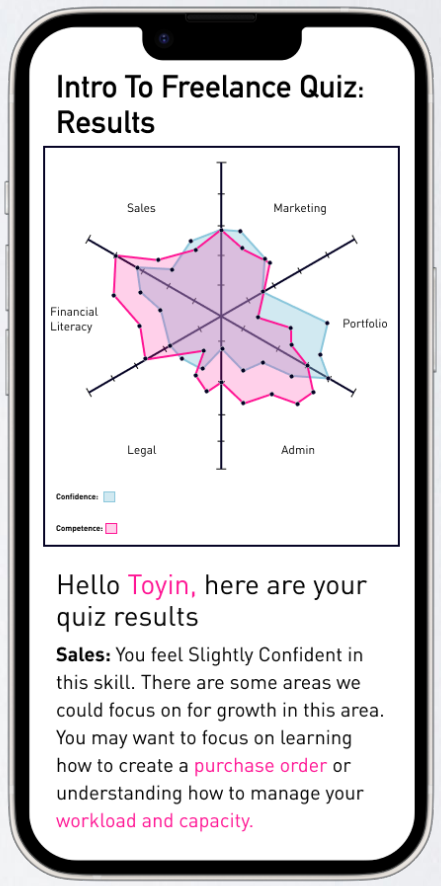
The Freelance Exchange Programme

Helping emerging sole traders turn their side hustle into their main hustle through peer to peer exchange, employability workshops, career coaching, enterprise support and masterclasses. Partners secured included Financial Time, Flic, Anyways Creative, Orrick, ACE and more.

£40,000







The Freelance Odyssey Tool

Designed to support young created 18-30 in East London via design sprints. Our bespoke co-created assessment tool allows young freelancers to have a career development plan. Supporting organisations like the Good Growth Hub and Local Champions to assess their progress before and after capacity-building sessions.

£15,000

We are catalysts of change.

Add data









MINDSHIFTS

Intergenerational perception shifting experiences for community leaders, mentees and young people as well as employers and industry leaders seeking to build trust and understanding.

From £2,000

HEAR FROM KEY PARTNERS ABOUT WHAT WE ACHIEVED TOGETHER, OVER THE PAST 2 YEARS.

INCLUDING FROM THE GOOD GROWTH HUB, ACTIVE COMMUNITIES NETWORK AND THE DEMOCRACY FUND



Jo Lacey

Senior Relationship Manager
Good Growth Hub

Nikita Vervelde's exceptional qualities and contributions have had a profound impact on Good Growth Hub's collaborative endeavours.

Initially engaging with Nikita as a facilitator, her skills in design thinking and innate communication flair immediately stood out. Over time, our working relationship has flourished, resulting in remarkable outcomes for our programmes and, most importantly, the young creatives and industry partners we serve.

Nikita brings a unique perspective to her work, drawing from her lived experiences and an expansive understanding of the challenges faced by young creatives, particularly freelancers from minority backgrounds in the creative and tech sectors. Her dynamic, intellectual, yet always personable approach has been instrumental in assisting Good Growth Hub in developing innovative research and co-design strategies.

In her co-design sessions, Nikita has skillfully united diverse voices of stakeholders, yielding tangible results that have significantly influenced our new Freelance Exchange support program for emerging freelancers. She has suggested and implemented new technologies, from AI to app designs, enabling young freelancers to identify and access the support they need most.

Furthermore, Nikita's proficiency in diversity and inclusion (D+I) training has been consistently well-received by industry employers. Her sessions are not only impactful but also contribute to fostering a more inclusive and dynamic work environment. I am confident that anyone who has collaborated with Nikita, be it Good Growth Hub or any other employers and young people, would wholeheartedly recommend bringing her on board to infuse dynamism and fresh approaches into their work. Nikita Vervelde's commitment and expertise have undoubtedly made a lasting mark on our initiatives, and we look forward to continued collaboration.



Local Champions played an essential role in connecting the UK Democracy Fund with excellent organisations that could work to address the low voting rates of Black people in the UK through running effective voter registration campaigns and producing important learning into what works.

By working with Local Champions we were able to connect effectively with the kinds of trusted organisations who would be good at this work, and that we wouldn't otherwise have known.

Local Champions encouraged organisations to see that they could leverage their relationships to support democratic participation, and provided support to produce strong applications.

By regularly convening them as a peer group Local Champions has supported their developing capacity and confidence in this new area, enabled them to share learning and is producing insights which will support the wider sector in working to register the Black community to vote.

Ellen Berry

Head of the UK Democracy Fund



WHAT'S NEXT FOR LOCAL CHAMPIONS?



Nikita Gicanda Vervelde

Why do we do it?

We believe in the power of potential and we're inspired by what change makers do when they're able to use it. We also believe that the most sustainable way to bring about lasting change is to put that power into the hands of as many people as possible.

...into the hands of people permanently.

Moving Forward (our 2024-2026 focus areas):

1. Real Value Partnerships for a radically better future
2. Youth employment and career Agency
3. Systems innovation and product development
4. Sport for development and sport development pathways go global.

We believe in breakthrough collaboration for female empowerment.

"A new set of possibilities"

WHAT'S NEXT FOR LOCAL CHAMPIONS?

1-Real value partnerships for a radically better future

We're seeking research, institutional and brand partnerships committed to deep social impact and creating real value. We plan to relaunch and co-design new initiatives that tackle the SDGs. Particularly interested in brands looking to reduce extreme poverty inequality of economic opportunity and health imbalances



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2 - Youth Employment and Career Agency



Youth employment and opportunity
95% of our freelancers are under the age of 30. Our founder is 31 and 33.. We run 3 youth-led initiatives. We want to build on this and secure core funding to employ 3 young people full-time across our creative and facilitation teams. Now is the time to invest in the youth to not only tackle the cost of living and climate crisis but to radically inform and redesign future systems of society.

2 - youth employment and opportunity



4- sport development and sport for development go global



WHAT'S NEXT FOR LOCAL CHAMPIONS?

3 - Scale systems innovation consultancy and our product development



We will continue to build upon our pilots to test and innovate new solutions to existing challenges and problems faced by residents in our communities such as childcare during sports provisions; well-being during incubators; retreats for mentors; career- assessment tools for freelancers and more.

4- Sport development and sport for development initiatives go global



We plan to launch a local champions female athlete sports development academy for boxing, football and basketball creating pathways between Rwanda and UK and supporting breakthrough female collaboration. Building access, participation and technological disruption to support underserved female athletes across both regions. This will include our sport for development pathways supporting mothers, carers and those with trauma and our sport development pathways creating centres of excellence in partnership with Badu Sports.









The sky is no longer the limit.

<u>THANK YOU</u> to every single person who helped us move forward and dream.

Each and every contributor, facilitator, friend, supporter, referral maker, participant, beneficiary, audience, funder, venue and its staff, mentor, mentee, community member, shop, local resident, cafe, caterer, IT support, office and co working space,

You are appreciated.

AND EXPLORE OUR METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH :

Loughborough Collaborative Dissertation

Our model to delivery

Our Core Values

Our Policies

Contact and Socials